

# Polk County Soil & Water Conservation



## CONSERVATION AWARDS PRESENTED AT POLK COUNTY FAIR

The Polk SWCD presented its 2008 conservation awards at the Polk County Fair on July 16, 2008. Left to right: Native Buffer Farmer of the Year – Tom, Anne, Max (front) & John Nieland; Partner of the Year – Tom Levis for Polk County Conservation; Urban Steward of the Year – Jan Berg; and Conservation Farmer of the Year – Ed & Mary Craig.

### CAMP CREEK UPDATE

By Brandon Dittman, Camp Creek Coordinator  
The Camp Creek Project was scheduled to end in June of this year. However, a great deal of work had been requested from Camp Creek landowners as interest in implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) continued to stream into the Polk County NRCS office; these requests were validated with signed cost-share contracts for yet uncompleted projects when June came to an end. The administrators in Des Moines saw they had a good project going with continued opportunities for improving the water quality of Camp Creek and decided to fund the project for 2 more years through June of 2010.

Until that time and as long as total yearly budget allocations are available, Camp Creek Project funding can be combined with the NRCS' EQIP funding up to a 75% cost share rate for the following BMPs: Grade Stabilization Structures, Manure Settling Basins/ Waste Storage Facilities, Streambank Stabilization, Water and Sediment Control Basins, Pasture and Hayland Management (fencing livestock out of the creek/ providing alternative water sources), and funding up to 50% is available for Timber Stand Improvement.

Some interesting Camp Creek funded projects completed during 2008 include: a large Pipe Drop Grade Stabilization Structure placed at the bottom of a newly shaped, 2 acre Grassed Waterway, (combined the structure and the waterway will prevent an estimated 241 tons of sediment from reaching Camp Creek annually) a Gabion Basket Rock Chute again located at

the bottom of a newly shaped, 2 acre Grassed Waterway, (combined this structure and the waterway will prevent an estimated 107 tons of sediment from reaching Camp Creek annually) and an all concrete Manure Settling Basin located near a major tributary's confluence with Camp Creek (this structure will prevent an estimated 103 tons of sediment from reaching Camp Creek annually).

Those who enjoy Thomas Mitchell Park west of Mitchellville will be happy to hear the silted-in pond will be restored during a 3-yr long project. A few years ago, a fish kill had decimated the game fish population in the pond. Polk County Conservation Board with assistance from the Polk County NRCS office and Iowa Dept. of Ag. and Land Stewardship - Division of Soil Conservation applied for and received a nearly \$250,000 grant to make watershed improvements above the pond and to dredge the silt out of it, restoring it to its original depth of around 25 feet. This project will also benefit Camp Creek by extending the life of this beneficial sediment trap. If the pond was allowed to silt in, suspended sediment would bypass it making its way directly to Camp Creek.

I thank all of you who have made the Camp Creek Project successful and encourage those land owners sitting on the fence about possible conservation BMP implementations to take advantage of the 75% cost share availability while it lasts through June 2010.



### NACD POSTER CONTEST

The annual National Conservation Districts Poster Contest theme for 2009 is "Dig It! The Secrets of Soil". The poster contest provides kindergarten through twelfth grade students an opportunity to convey their thoughts about soil, water and related natural resource issues through art. Entry forms, rules, eligibility and ideas can be found at [www.cdiowa.org](http://www.cdiowa.org)

### 2009 Conservation & Agriculture Scholarship Offered

The Conservation District of Iowa is sponsoring the conservation and agriculture scholarship program again in 2009. The scholarships are offered to Iowa high school seniors for their first year of education on the college level pursuing programs of study in any field of agriculture or natural resources. Three scholarships will be awarded on the state level in the amounts of \$1800, \$1200, and \$1000. Polk County seniors should submit their application to the Polk Soil & Water Conservation District, 1513 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ste. 3, Ankeny, IA 50023 no later than March 3, 2009. The 2009 scholarship application is available online at <http://www.cdiowa.org/awards.html>. The awards are chosen on basis of leadership, service, character, self-motivation, and scholastic achievement.

### 2009 ENVIROTHON

The Envirothon is North America's largest high school environmental competition. Currently,

teams representing over 45 states and Canadian provinces compete at the national level for \$75,000 in scholarships and prizes. The 2009 Envirothon topic is "Biodiversity in a Changing World" and is open to high school students.

Get your team together and go to [www.envirothon.org](http://www.envirothon.org) for all the registration and resource information.

### COMMISSIONERS

Jane Clark, Chair, Walnut Township  
Steve Roe, Vice Chair, Des Moines Twp.  
Mark Nemmers, Treasurer, Webster Twp.  
Chip Mathis, Elkhart Township  
Don Soutter, Beaver Township

### ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS

Louise Moon, Des Moines Township  
Lisa Walters, Walnut Township  
John Olmstead, Beaver Township  
Heath Ellis, Four Mile Township  
John Hall, Douglas Township

### NRCS DISTRICT FIELD OFFICE STAFF

Paul Miller, District Conservationist  
Craig Chapman, Soil Conservation Tech  
Ronda Hathcock, Civil Engineering Tech  
Bruce Atherton, Agricultural Engineer  
Jennifer Welch, Urban Conservationist  
Karen Hansen, Urban Conservationist  
Brandon Dittman, Camp Creek Coordinator  
Zach DeYoung, Asst District Conservation  
Pam Schwartz, State Secretary

### Funds To Reduce Stormwater Runoff

Polk Soil & Water Conservation District announces new technical assistance and cost share programs for urban residents. Financial assistance has been made available for urban landowners to install property enhancing practices.

Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) funds have been made available by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Division of Soil Conservation for infiltration based practices that reduce stormwater runoff from urban areas.

Once approved, cost share can reimburse the landowner for up to 50% the total cost of the approved practice.

### What practices qualify?

Rain gardens  
Pervious Asphalt and Concrete  
Soil quality restoration  
Modular Block Paver or Grass Pave System  
Native landscaping  
Infiltration Basins or Trenches  
Biosvales  
Bioretention  
Please contact the Polk Soil & Water Conservation District to get started on practices

### that enhance your property and protect water quality!

#### Fourmile Creek Watershed

The Fourmile Creek watershed encompasses approximately 76,642 acres, covering 120 square miles of urban and agricultural land, primarily in Polk County. Several communities including Ankeny, Altoona, Des Moines, Pleasant Hill, and Slater are located in Fourmile Creek.

The Polk County Soil and Water Conservation District is sponsoring a grant-funded watershed project aimed at improving and protecting the water quality in Fourmile Creek. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship is providing funding for the project.

The efforts are focused at watershed planning and practice implementation. The district is helping communities implement green infrastructure in the watershed to protect water quality in the stream. One first step in protecting the green infrastructure is to protect the stream corridor, which was heavily impacted by this years flooding. Stream buffers and ordinances to manage and protect the stream channel and floodplain are being discussed and implemented.

Polk SWCD is also providing cost share and technical assistance to residents, developers, and

cities to design and install infiltration based best management practices (BMPs). Work is also underway with agricultural producers to protect cropland from erosion and to reduce the impact of livestock on the stream. Contact the district for more information or assistance.

### Rain Gardens

Rain gardens are flower gardens landscaped with perennial and native vegetation that soak up rainwater. They are located to capture runoff from impervious surfaces such as driveways, roofs, and streets.

Homeowners would be surprised to learn that hundreds of thousands of gallons of rain fall on an urban lot in a year. If that rainfall runs off your property as stormwater, it can negatively impact water quality by washing pollutants directly into nearby streams or ponds. It also increases flooding potential and erosion in stream corridors.

Rain gardens soak up rainfall, reduce stormwater runoff and remove pollutants, and reduce flooding and erosion potential. By installing a rain garden, homeowners can create an attractive, creative landscape feature that also protects water quality.

Funding assistance may be available from the Polk Soil and Water Conservation District to install rain gardens, and other approved storm water management practices.

More information is available in the Iowa Rain Garden Design and Installation Manual - a Residential Rain Garden Guide. To download the Iowa Rain Garden Design Manual go to [www.polk-swcd.org](http://www.polk-swcd.org) or for more information about creating a rain garden contact Polk Soil and Water Conservation District.

### What can I do to protect water quality?

- Learn more about your watershed.
- Get involved - become an advocate for your watershed.
- Never dump anything down the storm drain.
- Pick up pet waste.
- Don't hose down driveways- sweep instead.
- Sweep up lawn clippings and fertilizers from paved surfaces.
- Use less fertilizer or low phosphorus fertilizer.
- Take your vehicle to the car wash, or wash it on the grass.
- Use native plants in your landscaping.
- Install and maintain buffer strips along creeks.
- Plant a rain garden.

## POLK CO. SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT FINANCIAL REPORT JULY 1, 2007 – JUNE 30, 2008

### 1M BUDGET (Operating Fund)

Total Allocation	\$ 2,124.81
Commissioners Expense	\$ 901.74
Office Expense	\$ 207.67
Printing Expenses	\$ 150.00
Dues Paid	\$ 865.40
Remaining	\$ 0.00

### '07-'08 IOWA FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Total Allocation	\$ 18,110.00
Spent or Obligated	\$ 3,034.21
Remaining	\$ 15,075.79

### REAP – PRACTICES '07-'08

Total Allocation	\$ 7,369.29
Spent or Obligated	\$ 1,920.00
Remaining	\$ 5,449.29

### REAP – FORESTRY '07-'08

Total Allocation	\$ 2,456.53
Spent or Obligated	\$ 2,314.35
Remaining	\$ 142.18

### WATERSHED PROTECTION FUND '07-'08

Total Allocation	\$ 94,208.00
Spent or Obligated	\$ 57,667.79
Remaining	\$ 36,540.21

## POLK SWCD ACCOMPLISHMENTS FISCAL YEAR 2008

### Practices Applied with Polk SWCD Assistance (October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008)

Practice	Amount
Cropland with Improved Soil Quality	5,648 acres
Land with Improved Water Quality	6,595 acres
Conservation Plans Written	7,966 acres
Conservation Cover Planted	152 acres
Residue Management	
Mulch Tillage	3,430 acres
No-Till	1,697 acres
Grassed Waterways	3 acres
Water & Sediment Control Basins	7 basins
Wetland Restoration, Creation & Enhancement	66 acres
Forest Stand Improvement	14 acres
Wildlife Habitat Management	168 acres





P.O. BOX 506  
SLATER, IA 50244  
OFFICE/ 515-685-2508  
FAX/ 515-685-2535


LANDSCAPES-BY-DESIGN.COM

SPECIALIZING IN CREATIVE, FUNCTIONAL  
AND LOW MAINTENANCE LANDSCAPE DESIGNS,  
UTILIZING NATIVE PLANTS AND MATERIALS



Excavation Services  
P.O. Box 456 • Sully, Iowa 50251


OFFICE 641-594-3500	SHOP 641-594-3530	FAX 641-594-3507
ERVIN FOPMA 641-891-2248	EMAIL <a href="mailto:ewi@netins.net">ewi@netins.net</a>	WES VAN WYK 641-990-1339



Helping Farmers Produce & Market, Profitably.

Heartland Co-op is a proud member  
of Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance.

Prescribing soil & water conservation  
practices that are economically  
feasible and environmentally  
favorable.





Farm Ponds • Terraces • Waterways  
Commercial & Residential Site Grading  
3826 66<sup>th</sup> St. • Urbandale • 515-276-1745 • 515-278-1724



Commercial • Residential • Farm Work  
Conservation

Ankeny • Bondurant  
964-3366